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REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed July 6, 2006, Examiner objected to claims 1 and 13 as using a means clause that did not meet the analysis set forth in MPEP 2181, objected to claims 8 and 20 as reciting an improper multiple dependency, objected to claims 2, 14 and 31 as having an insufficient antecedent basis with respect to claims 2 and 14 and an unclear limitation with respect to claim 31. Claims 1, 9-13 and 21-24 were rejected as anticipated by both Hammond and Karpisek. Claims 2-7, 14-19, 25-32 were indicated as being allowable.

With respect to the objection to the means clause in claims 1 and 13, the Examiner refers to "fastener bracing means" which is now employed in claims 1 and 13, as amended now provides the "means for" structure in order to invoke 35 USC section 112, paragraph 6. The fastener bracing means is now provided with a description of structure (at least two aligned spaced apart apertures) for snugly journaled mounting therethrough of the elongate fasteners.

With respect to the objections to claims 8 and 20 under 37 CFR 1.75(c), those claims are now amended to remove the multiple dependency.

With respect to the objection to claims 2 and 14 as having an insufficient antecedent basis for the limitation "said fastener receiving apertures" claims 2 and 14 are now amended to correctly refer to said at least two aligned spaced apart apertures. The antecedents for this limitation is found in the amendments to claims 1 and 13 from which claims 2 and 14 respectively depend. Claims 7 and 19 are also amended to now refer to said at least two aligned spaced apart apertures and the references in claims 7 and 8 and 19 and 20 to fastener apertures are amended to refer to at least one aperture of the at least two aligned spaced apart apertures.

With respect to the objection to claim 31 and the limitation "said first panel of said third and fourth panel", claim 31 has been amended to now properly refer to the "extensions

mountable onto upper edges of said third and fourth panels so as to dispose narrow ends of said extensions towards said first panel,".

What follows is applicant's response to the rejections of claims 1, 9-13, and 21-24 under 35 USC Section 102 as anticipated by either Hammond or Karpisek:

Examiner states that Hammond discloses "a rigid fastener bracing means (20) on the outside of the first and second panels and on the inside of the third and fourth panels (36) with apertures for the rigid bracing of the panels". Hammond in fact teaches that inside flange 36 is mounted to end wall 16 and supports an array of pins 38 which protrude from flange 36 so as to engage corresponding openings 39 that are horizontally aligned with the pins. As seen in Figure 3, the pins extend through openings 39 and that it is nowhere taught or suggested the pins actually engage the latch assembly 20. In fact in the view of Figure 3, if pin 38 extended through opening 39 into latch assembly 20, the end of the pin might interfere with the operation of latch bar 48, although this is merely speculation because, in any event, Figure 7 clearly shows that pins 38 do not engage latch assembly 20.

As claimed in claim 1 as filed, a fastener bracing means on one panel of the first and second panels is mounted on the outside surfaces thereof and the fastener bracing means on the third or fourth panels are mounted on the inside surfaces thereof. Thus in comparing the claim language to the Hammond reference, if end wall 16 is equated to a third or fourth panel so that, as Examiner states, the inside flange 36 is the fastener bracing means on the inside of the third or fourth panel, then the latch assembly 20 is the fastener bracing means on the outside of the first or second panel, that is, on the outside of sidewall 14. Claim 1 as filed also states that the fastener bracing means have fastener receiving apertures therethrough for rigid bracing of rigid fasteners mounted through and between the fastener bracing means on the adjacent panels, and claim 1 also specifies that rigid fasteners are mounted through the fastener bracing means on the adjacent panels. However, as already established, as the fasteners of Hammond relied on by Examiner are pins 38, they are mounted in apertures in inside flange 36 but are not mounted through any apertures in latch assembly 20 (relied on by Examiner as providing the fastener bracing means on the outside of the first and second panels). Rather, pins 38 are merely mounted through apertures in the inner flange of the U-shaped channel illustrated in cross section

in Figure 3. The inner flange of the U-shaped channel is not mounted on the outside of sidewall 14 but is in fact integral to the inner surface of sidewall 14 and consequently the cited structure in Hammond does not correspond to the claim structure in claim 1 as filed.

Examiner is also of the view that the Karpisek reference discloses the structure claimed in claim 1 as filed, and in particular that a rigid fastener bracing means brackets 21 on the outside of the first and second panels and on the inside of the third and fourth panels brackets 23 with apertures (holes) through the side edge of the first and second panels for bolt brackets 21 to operate through to engage the adjacent panel and behind fastener brackets 23 for engaging the adjacent panels (column 3, lines 15-25), anticipates the corresponding claimed structure in claim 1. However, in Karpisek what is merely taught is that "panel 17 is provided with slide bolts 21 for engagement in holes 22 in frames of the panels 15, 16. The side [slide] bolts 21 (provided on both panels 17 and 18) and the holes 22 provide securing means" (column 3, lines 16-19). Flanges 19 of the upright sides of panels 17 and 18 are engaged with hooks 23 to provide a coupling means for the erected panels (column 3, lines 21-23). Although no further written description is given, it appears from Figure 3 that slide bolts 21 slide through holes 22 which are only in the frames of both panels 17 and adjacent panels 15 and 16 so as to engage the corresponding holes 22 in the frames of panels 15 and 16. The point is, there does not appear to be any fastener bracing means at all on either the outside surfaces of the panel unless the flange of the angle iron members forming the frame of panel 17 are characterized as such, and there appears to be no corresponding fastener bracing means on the inside of the adjacent panels 15 or 16 unless it is the corresponding flanges of angle iron members forming the panel frames.

In neither the teaching of Hammond or of Karpisek, is the rigidity between adjacent panels achieved as is found in the present invention, and as now more clearly claimed in claims 1 and 13 as amended. In particular, in the present invention, the fastener bracing means mounted on the inside and outside of adjacent panels lend rigidity to the alignment of the adjacent panels by rigidly aligning the fastener extending through the apertures in the fastener bracing means. Consequently as now claimed, each of the fastener bracing means includes at least two aligned spaced apart apertures for snugly journaled mounting therethrough of an elongate fastener. Thus, with adjacent fastener bracing means on adjacent panels, the aligned spaced apart apertures on each of the fastener bracing means forms an aligned array of the

aligned spaced apart apertures (see for example aligned holes 42a in Figure 5) so that an elongate fastener may be linearly journaled through the array so as to rigidly align the adjacent panels, the elongate fasteners also providing for securely releasably mating the adjacent panels together.

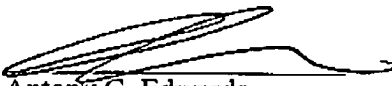
It is respectfully submitted that the Hammond and Karpisek references did not teach nor suggest the limitations in claims 1 and 13 as filed, nor certainly as those claims are now amended. It is submitted that claims 1 and 13 clearly patentably distinguish over Hammond and Karpisek. It is also respectfully submitted that the dependent claims depending directly or indirectly from the independent claims 1 and 13 are patentable for at least the reason that they include the limitations which patentably distinguish over the prior art.

A certified copy of the Canadian priority document will be provided upon allowance of the application.

Examiner is respectfully requested to now pass this application to allowance.

Respectfully submitted,  
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